

Persru News 01/01

Articles for the ALPERSRU Newsletter may be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to:

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Articles are solicited from all readers.

COMMANDING OFFICER: CAPT R. D. Reck

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The Advancements Business Line

Maintenance of Marks Sheets

ALCOAST 045/01, which announced the elimination of the requirement to print and file Marks Sheet (CG-3306), has created some concerns from the Field Unit level. While the requirement to file 3306's in the PDR is gone, each PERSRU still needs to keep the electronic version that is sent at the end of each month so they can access the most current eval for any member under PERSRU control. HRSIC (adv) recommends keeping each of these files for approximately 15 months for this purpose (i.e. E7 and above are only marked once per year).

The ALCOAST also stated that enlisted performance information is available in CGHRMS. The enlisted performance information is loaded into CGHRMS following each PMIS/JUMPS update, however based on the timing of receipt and subsequent successful scanning at HRSIC, there could be a delay of approximately 2 weeks before the eval appears on the PeopleSoft application. The PDS system (maintained at OSC Martinsburg), as updated here at HRSIC and CGHQ, is the only "real time" up-to-date system. In some cases, the PERSRU will receive an updated 3306 prior to the information appearing on CGHRMS. In the future, the PeopleSoft application should offer "real time" information.

The main Field Unit concern (adv) has heard deals with the feedback mechanism to them in regards to destruction of the copy of the CG-3788 they retain until they are informed of successful input into PDS, at which time they can destroy the CG-3788 copy. Our suggestion is for the person(s) receiving the electronic CG-3306 file to forward a copy of CG-3306s for each OPFAC directly to their Field Unit representative. We fully understand this will require additional work, however believe this involves much less work than the previous requirement to file "hard" copies in the PERSRU PDRs every month. Please help us to help all involved as we "grow through" this process. We encourage any ideas/suggestions on how to best serve all customers. HRSIC, of course, cannot establish policy on this, but until any policy changes are made, we wish to streamline and make this as painless (workload, time, and effort) as possible. Thanks and if you have any questions don't hesitate to give me a call at (785) 339-3406.

YN2 Schmitz
(ADV)

The RAS Business Line

Travel Time on Retirement

There is no provision for authorizing travel time while on active duty for someone who is separating or retiring, see JFTR, Appendix A, **Effective Date of PCS Orders**. For members being separated or retired the effective date of their PCS order is the last day of active duty. Item two indicates those members who are authorized travel time to return to their home while on active duty, specifically Reservists and recalled retired members. The reason we don't authorize retirees time to travel while on active duty is because we are not ordering them to travel to a new PDS to report on a specific date. Retirees have one year to make a Home of Selection and travel there.

Les Weisbeck, (G-WPM-2)

Retired Pay Computations

As personnel approach retirement eligibility, they frequently inquire about how their pay will be computed. This is especially true of warrant officers who contemplate retirement at the first of the year or in a month that a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) will go into effect. Those individuals who have responsibility for processing retirements should be aware that:

All enlisted members and all regular officers who enter into retirement on 1 January will have their retirement pay based on the pay scales in effect on 1 January. All enlisted members and all regular officers who enter into retirement on the first day of a month in which a COLA goes into effect, will have their retirement pay based on the pay scales in effect on that day, i.e., 1 August. All **warrant officers** who enter into retirement on 1 January will have their retirement pay based on the pay scales in effect on

31 December, or if they enter retirement on the first day of a month which is also the date on which a COLA is effective, their retirement pay will be based on the pay scales in effect on the last day of the prior month, i.e., 30 June.

The distinction between the two is that Coast Guard enlisted and regular officers are retired under authority of a law which directs their retirement to be computed under pay rates in effect "at the time of retirement". Warrant Officers are retired under authority of a law which directs that their retired pay will be computed at the rates in effect "on day before retirement".

If there are questions about the retirement rates, please contact HRSIC (RAS).

RAS Procedural Changes

The Reserve section of RAS has had a few procedural changes take place over the last couple of months. We now do all 20 year letters, RET-1, RET-2 processing jointly. Each desk will have its own alpha break as follows:

- **(A-D)** YN3 Adair (785) 339-3433
- **(E-G, O-R)** Sharon Fordham (785) 339-3412
- **(S-Z) & (All Active duty certificates)** YN3 Kimmell (785) 339-3414
- **(H-N)** YN2 Swanson (785) 339-3434

You may also call us toll-free at: 1-800-772-8724 (follow the prompts)

The SES Business Line

ENROUTE STATUS WHEN SEPARATING:

Recently, the Separations Section has encountered a problem with terminal leave being used in conjunction with "permissive leave days" and/or "retirement processing point days". Under no circumstance should this happen on the Retirement Endorsement on Orders. There are 7 possible SDAII fields that describe the member's status while enroute. They are:

1. TT--Travel Time
2. PT--Proceed Time
3. AI--Leave INCONUS
4. AO--Leave OUTCONUS
5. CA--Compensatory Absence
6. NA--Non-chargeable Absence
7. DA--Dateline Adjustment

When submitting "permissive leave" and "processing days" in conjunction with leave the documents do not process cleanly and an account discrepancy "must" be generated by the PMIS team and sent to the Separations Section within the SES Business Line. This "delay to pay member" can be avoided by submitting the Endorsement on Orders correctly and in accordance with set guidelines.

Glenn Hess

Interim Adjustments

When a member has prior service, a Statement of Creditable Service/Sea Service (SOCS/SOCSS) needs to be completed after they enter the Coast Guard. Sometimes it takes several months to retrieve records from the other service's records center to verify the member's prior service. Because of this, we can offer the member an interim adjustment, which is based off of the information that is contained on the member's DD-214. The PERSRU can request an interim adjustment to change the member's Pay Base Date, Active Duty Base Date, and/or Sea Time. This adjustment will only correct the member's entitlement and will increase their longevity pay as soon as we can process the change. They will not receive their back-pay entitlement until the SOCS case has been completed. For example:

If the newly accessed member's DD-214 reflects that they have 3 years and 5 months of sea service in the Navy and the member knows that this isn't an error on the DD-214, then we can go ahead and give him/her credit for the sea time before we complete our verification process; however, if our verification process shows that the member only served 1 year and 5 months of sea service and not the 3 years and 5 months as indicated on the DD-214, then the member will be in an over paid status.

Due to this potential discrepancy, if the PERSRU requests an interim adjustment to the member's Pay Base Date, Active Duty Base Date, or Sea Time, then the request must state:

"The member has been counseled and understands that if the total sea time/prior service added, based on the DD-214, is not supported by the prior service records, then the member will be in an over paid status."

If this change is for advancement purposes, the request must state:

"The member has been counseled and understands that if he/she is advanced based on the interim adjustment and the time is not verified, then the member is liable for the erroneous advancement and any monies related."

To request an interim adjustment, prepare a Rapidraft (CG-3883) and mail it with the member's DD-214 to HRSIC (SES).

Elissa Jones

SOI Reminder from SES:

There have been an increased number of Statement of Intent (SOI's) for separation that state that a member intends to sell leave when asking for an early separation. Article 12.B.8.a of the Personnel Manual clearly states:

"Commanding officers may authorize release up to 30 days early for a member with a unique schooling or career opportunity he or she would lose if released on his or her normal enlistment expiration. The Coast Guard Personnel Command will not waive the 30-day limit on this authority. Members must combine all remaining earned leave and separation, the two totaling a maximum of 90 days."

In other words, members may not sell leave when being separated early under this article.

Example: Member has 72 days of leave. The maximum that a person may depart the unit is 90 days. $90 - 72 = 18$ days early separation the CO can authorize. If the member used all leave and the CO authorized 30 days, it would exceed the maximum (90) days.

Please also note, if a member is authorized the maximum days of early separation (30), and the separation date falls on a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, member must be separated on that day. The member may not be separated on the Thursday before.

Please counsel your members of these facts, so that they can schedule to take all available leave and still take advantage of this opportunity.

YN1 Jeff Felty

Statement of Intent

Next to the actual separation transaction, the Statement of Intent is the single most important transaction in the separation process. When an SOI processes, it generates a projected LES that we use in SES to compute a member's pay on the date of separation. Since it is our goal to pay each member as much money as possible due him/her, the SOI is critical. Please be aware of some of the most common problems encountered when processing a member for separation.

- Computation and disposition of leave: Please ensure the member is aware that in decisiveness in whether to sell leave or use it, can mean a delay in processing sold leave. Sometimes this delay can be as much as 45 days after the actual separation document processes.
- Retirement SOI's: On regular retirements, a member's separation date is the last day of the month. The first day of the month is the first day in a retired status.
- Retention action after separation SOI processes: Whenever you have a retention after a separation SOI processes, it is imperative that you re-submit the separation SOI. This is most common when a member must extend his enlistment to have obligated service to make it to his retirement date (i. e. member's EOE is 13 Jan and retirement date is 01 Feb. You begin a one month extension on 14 Jan for member to stay until approved retirement date. You must re-submit the separation SOI after submitting the begin extension).
- Disability Retirements: Ensure that the date on the SOI is the date of active duty (i. e. one day prior to the member's effective retirement date).
- Member changes his mind after SOI processes: If the member changes his mind within 30 days of his separation date, submit an e-mail SOI advising SES of any changes. It doesn't hurt to submit one in SDA-II. We frequently check SDA-II to see if an SOI is in the system waiting to be transmitted. So if you want to be safe, submit them both. The actual work is minimal, but can prevent overpayments and underpayments.

YN1 Jeff Felty

Coast Guard Human Resources System (CGHRMS)

Project Schedule and Status

Function	Status	Date NLT
HRSIC - Field 7.5 Version at PERSRU – Competencies, Awards, Education, Language, License/Certifications – this is an acceleration of functionality to the field	On Track	5/21/01
WRI - Establish PeopleSoft Version 8 Test & Development Environment	On Track	4/16/2001
WRI -Convert 7.5 Applications to Version 8 Assignment, Training Admin, PAL, Security Clearance, GWIS	On Track	8/2/2001
WRI - Medical Readiness System (Immunization tracking - <i>Anthrax</i> , Waivers, Color Vision, Physical Exam Status & Tickler... does not include detailed exam data, medical history, or occupational medical monitoring)	On Track	8/2/2001
HRSIC - Self Service Release Version 8 – Phone number, address, Emergency contract, W-2 Reissue, Direct Deposit, E-Mail Change, Tax Exemptions, Competencies, Awards, Education, Language, Part of Payroll interface.	On Track	9/11/01
HRSIC - Release 2 – Disciplinary Actions, Allotments, Enlistment contracts, TAD, Leave – absences, Reserve Drills, Entitlement Changes –more payroll actions.	On Track	1/18/02
HRSIC - Release 3 – Promote, PCS, Leave Active Service, Reserve Orders, Interface to MEPS, SGLI, Reserve Screen Questionnaire, Advance Pay – Finishes Payroll.	On Track	6/24/02
WRI - Electronic Training Request	On Track	10/1/02
WRI - Career Management (Boards/Panels, Register, Status Tracking, Seps/Retirement, CFTRR, HYT)	On Track	11/19/01
WRI - Employee Review Enlisted/Officer	On Track	8/1/02
WRI - Enlisted Advancement Processing (Existing Policies – potential to streamline is high)	On Track	12/2/02
WRI - PDR Imaging Integration with PeopleSoft	On Track	10/29/02
WRI - Case Management (Disability Eval, Central Registry, HIV tracking – doesn't incld med monitoring)	On Track	12/30/02

Unit Travel System (UTS)

Unit Travel System is a Windows-based application developed to serve as the primary Temporary Duty (TDY) and Permanent Change of Station (PCS) travel claim/voucher preparation system for the United States Coast Guard. In addition to creating travel claims, UTS can perform many other tasks. These tasks include creating and electronically processing TDY and PCS travel orders, as well as preparing requests for advances for both TDY and PCS travel expenses.

UTS allows travelers and supervisors to process travel document requests. The process begins when an individual traveler or a designated proxy (admin assistant) creates a travel authorization, advance request or claim settlement request in UTS. Once an authorization or request is created, the traveler will release & send the transaction to their supervisor for approval. The transaction is then systematically transferred to the unit Authorizing Official (AO) or supervisor. The AO will then review the work and either return the transaction back to the traveler for modifications or approve the transaction. Once approved the transaction is transmitted electronically to HRSIC for payment.

UTS will not only reduce the time travel payments are received by eliminating the mailing process, it will also keep the traveler informed with the status of the claim. **Whether it is "Entered," "Approved," "Transmitted to HRSIC," or "Recognized by HRSIC," the traveler will know the status of the claim.** The traveler also has access to the UTS History of prior claims and authorizations sent through UTS.

BUILT-IN!

Are you unsure of what your per diem rates will be? No problem! UTS will show you the per diem rates from the past and present for whatever location you will be traveling to.

The Unit Travel System includes a feature that allows the traveler to review previously submitted travel claims and their status. Through the "History" screen, the traveler can access virtually every aspect of the claims entered. Because the UTS database maintains the claims, this "History" function acts as an electronic filing cabinet allowing instant access to the travel claims where they can be printed and/or reviewed.

USER FRIENDLY

UTS includes a searchable "Help" function to assist in the preparation and approval of travel documents. Various help topics can be accessed through the index of covered items or by simply selecting help for the current screen the traveler is on.

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Want To Be a Test Site?

HRSIC currently has about 6 Test Sites. Claims submitted by Test Sites are "real" and result in quicker payments. If you would like to participate as a Test Site, contact the Human Resource Services and Information Center's Travel Business Line Claims Assistance Team at 785-339-2250 or toll-free at **1-888-USCG-TVL** with any of your UTS questions or concerns.

The MAS Business Line

BLANKET ALLOTMENTS

Some administrative units and PERSRUs have been refusing to start allotments without the institution's bank routing number or the institution's bank account number. When a member requests to start an allotment, and doesn't have the institution's bank routing number or the institution's account number, but does have a three digit blanket code and a five digit blank abbreviation, please check SDA II Blanket Code Help Wheel (F2) to see if there is a match. If there is a match, then please follow the procedures for starting a blanket allotment, which are prescribed in Chapter 20, Section C, SDA II User Manual, HRSICINST M5231.2.

Various institutions have requested and been assigned blanket code numbers/abbreviations by the Coast Guard. When they solicit a CG member, and the member agrees to purchase the product, the member is normally provided a blanket allotment code/number by the agency and told to start the allotment. HRSIC has the routing number and account number for that agency on file and can process the allotment.

Kevin Elmer, (MAS)

CHANGE IN DEPENDENCY STATUS WHEN A MEMBER IS RECEIVING OUTCONUS COLA

When a member is receiving OUTCONUS COLA and acquires an additional BAH eligible family member (e.g., birth of a child), the effective dates of the Change in Dependency transaction (CG-4710A) and the Start/Resume COLA transaction (P607) must be when the new family member is acquired.

Example: A member is stationed in Hawaii and has one BAH eligible dependent (his spouse). This member is currently receiving OUTCONUS COLA with 1 dependent. On 27 January 2001, a new daughter is born. As of 27 January, this member is entitled to OUTCONUS COLA with 2 dependents.

The effective date of the Change in Dependency transaction (CG-4170A) will be 27 January 2001. The effective date of the Start/Resume COLA transaction (P607) will also be 27 January 2001.

This information will be included in the next change to the SDAII User Manual, HRSICINST M5231.2.

Bill Schirmer, (MAS)

DEPARTING ENDORSEMENT ON ORDERS TO BEGIN CONFINEMENT

For clarification purposes, **do not use the Departing Orders to Confinement transaction for civilian or military pretrial confinement**. The member's servicing PERSRU remains the same while in pretrial confinement.

This information will be included in the next change to page 11-C-3, SDA II User Manual, HRSICINST M5231.2.

YN1 Kenneth Starnes, Coast Guard Activities San Diego

SDA-II SUPPORT

PERSRUs who encounter SDA-II questions or problems which they are unable to resolve locally should call HRSIC at (785) 339-3540, menu option 2.

Prior to contacting HRSIC, attempts should be made to handle the situation at the lowest level possible. Refer to the SDAII User Manual, HRSICINST M5231.2, often. Specific attention should be given to Chapters 1 and 18. Chapter 1 provides a basic overview of SDAII. Chapter 18 explains system functions and procedures at a more in-depth level.

Here are some tips to ensuring smooth operation of SDA-II:

- Use the SDAII User Manual as a reference tool for procedures. Refer to the manual often when submitting difficult transactions and events.
- Pass the knowledge. Experienced users at the PERSRU should be aiding those that are still learning.
- Refer to the ALPERSRU's. Often, these contain procedures for the PERSRUs to follow while doing document submissions. ALPERSRU's going back to, and including, 1997 can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/hrsic/ALPERSRU.htm>.
- Ensure information is disseminated. Make sure the ALPERSRU's, Newsletters and messages make it to everyone in the PERSRU.
- Make sure SDAII is used correctly. This includes such things as:
 1. Use Shift-F9 to exit SDAII.
 2. Use F1 instead of the Enter Key.
 3. Delete incomplete transactions that are not going to be completed.
 4. Use Shift-? to clear an incorrect date before entering a new date.
- Use TOPTS to verify data. The information contained in SDAII is used for edits and as a help aid. However, PMIS/JUMPS is the final say on the accuracy of data.
- Use the reports in SDAII. Reports such as the Complete/Incomplete report in Review and Approval can help a PERSRU monitor accuracy, pending work, etc. Chapter 17 of the SDAII User Manual describes several of the reports available in SDAII.

YN2 Paul Mayhue, (MAS-CST)

SELRES BONUSES

Reserve members who are requesting subsequent payments of their SELRES bonus must have their request endorsed by their unit and by the servicing ISC.

ISCs are to ensure members meet participation standards (such as by checking segment 81s) prior to endorsing the requests. If members are qualified, the requests may then be forwarded by mail or FAX to HRSIC (MAS) for payment. Our fax number is (785) 339-3760.

YN1 Kim Finley, (MAS)

CSB/REDUX PROGRAM

There has been some confusion concerning the function of the DIEMS (Date of Initial Entry to Military Service) and Active Duty Base Date when determining a member's eligibility for the CSB/REDUX retirement program.

A member's DIEMS date must be on or after 1 August 1986 for the member to be eligible for the REDUX bonus.

The Active Duty Base Date is used to determine a member's 15 year anniversary date, which is the deadline for the member to choose his/her retirement plan.

HRSIC has begun mailing election packages to members who will become eligible this year. Members should be receiving their packages 6 months prior to their 15 year anniversary dates. The election forms must be returned in time to reach HRSIC (MAS) by the member's 15 year anniversary date.

Additional information concerning the CSB/REDUX retirement plan can be found at <http://pay2000.dtic.mil>.

YN1 Kim Finley, (MAS)

ENTITLEMENTS OF MEMBERS ORDERED TO "A" SCHOOL

PERSRU Yorktown reports that some members ordered there for "A" School are being authorized improper household shipments and proceed time entitlements

Article 4.G.10.c, Coast Guard Personnel Manual, prescribes that proceed time is not authorized in conjunction with PCS/Temduins or TDY/TAD where members are not authorized a shipment of HHG and the member will be required to utilize government quarters.

Orders PCS/Temduins to "A" School do not entitle a member to PCS HHG entitlements under Chapter 5, Part D, Joint Federal Travel Regulations. Section U5317(5), JFTR, provides that HHG transportation entitlement does not exist for members under orders to a course of instruction less than 20 weeks duration (except a CO may authorize a HHG shipment within the TDY/TAD weight allowance).

HHG shipment/storage entitlements of members ordered TDY/TAD to "A" School (or PCS/Temduins less than 20 weeks duration) are provided in Chapter 4, Part H, JFTR.

Self-procured (DITY) movements of HHG are also subject to the above rules.

Please be careful when you send a member to "A" School. Members who are improperly authorized HHG shipments are ultimately asked to pay the price for an unauthorized shipment and associated storage costs.

Dale Hosman, (MAS)

WHY DID MY GARNISHMENT CHANGE?

First, let's look at what entitlements can be garnished. (The key word is Pay).

- Basic Pay (Including IDT Drills)
- Special Pay (Sea, Hazardous Duty, Flight, Special Assignment, etc.)

Second, let's look at what is deducted. Forfeitures MGIB Federal, State, and FICA taxes SGLI Debt to the Government (Advance Pay or BAH, Overpayments, etc.)

Third, let's use FT3 Jones for an example to determine his Net Disposable Earnings. (I'm using round numbers for ease).

ENTITLEMENTS

Basic Pay: \$1,500.00

Enlistment Bonus: 71.00

Sea Pay 50.00

TOTAL: \$1,621.00

DEDUCTIONS

MGIB: \$100.00

Taxes (total): 350.00

SGLI: 16.00

Advance Pay (500.00) 42.00

TOTAL: \$508.00

Entitlements: \$1,621.00

Deductions: 508.00

Net Disposable Earnings (NDE): \$1,113.00

A typical Garnishment Order reads "\$750.00 not to exceed 50% of NDE." Calculate what 50% of FT3 Jones' NDE (\$1,113.00) equals. That amount is \$556.50. The most to be garnished from FT3 Jones' pay is \$556.50. Any more would exceed the 50% limitation. However, when FT3 Jones is through paying back his Advance Pay and his MGIB, his NDE goes up. Usually, every year the military receives a pay raise. There are also longevity raises. NDE will increase both times.

YNC John James, MAS

Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) Improvements

The Veteran's Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000 provides important changes to the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). The time limit for completing the high school requirement has been extended, veterans and reservists can become eligible by meeting this requirement before they apply for MGIB benefits. The initial period of active duty as the basis of eligibility for MGIB is eliminated.

Benefits under MGIB-Active duty and VEAP are payable for licensing or certification tests. These tests are needed to enter, maintain, or advance in a civilian vocation or profession. The veteran receives payment of up to \$2,000, depending on the fee.

Effective 1 November 2000, monthly rates for full time training increased from \$552 to \$650 for eligible veterans with three years of service, and from \$449 to \$558 for eligible veterans with two years service.

VEAP participants can become eligible for MGIB, whether they have contributions in their accounts or not if they:

- Make an irrevocable election to receive MGIB
- Were VEAP participants on or before 9 October 1996
- Continuously served on active duty from 9 October 1996 through 1 April 2000
- Make a nonrefundable payroll deduction or lump sum payment of \$2700 within 18 months after making the election to enroll in MGIB

An individual cannot use more than 48 months of VA education benefits. Eligible VEAP participants will be entitled to receive a total of 36 months of full time MGIB benefits provided they have not used more than 12 months of benefits under VEAP.

For more information about the improvements to the Montgomery GI Bill, see ALCOAST 047/01.

Uniformed Services Participation in the Thrift Savings Plan

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a retirement savings and investment plan that has been available to civilian employees of the Federal government since 1987. On 30 October 2000, the President signed the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001. A provision of the law extended participation in the TSP to members of the uniformed services.

Uniformed services retirees cannot contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The money that military participants invest in the TSP comes from pre-tax dollars and reduces their current taxable income.

There is a web site that highlights the Thrift Savings Plan; some of the main topics the web site addresses are:

- Differences in TSP participation for the uniformed services
- When can one join TSP
- Contributions
- Investment of contributions
- Withdrawal options once separated from the armed services
- Spousal rights on TSP
- Administration of TSP

For more information on specific issues, please log on to <http://www.tsp.gov>.